Avenues and Mid-Rise Buildings Study

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Toronto’s Official Plan – Urban Structure Map
The Avenues are intended to accommodate growth - new housing, retail, employment, community facilities all linked to improved public transportation.

- 19 studies have been undertaken - in consultation with the adjacent communities and Councillors. 14 are complete.

- Avenue Studies: create a Vision for change - recommendations for a mid-rise building form – that can be accommodated within the existing lot depths, and fit within the neighbourhood context.

- “150 Year Plan” – Must find a way to increase the pace
Toronto Avenues – “Old City”
Toronto Avenues – “New City”
19 Initiated to date
14 completed
Little up-take from the development community

What are we doing about it?
Avenue Study: The Queensway
The Avenues Initiative: What is Mid Rise?

- Mid-rise buildings generally range in height from 4 to 12 storeys... up to - but no taller than - the street right-of-way.

- Most Avenues fall within 20, 27, 30 or 36m R.O.W. width
Mid-Rise Objective: Intensification/Reurbanization

- Streets as vibrant urban places/neighbourhood Centres
- Strengthen neighbourhood retail/restaurants
- Support transit & other forms of transportation
- Create housing and job options
Challenge: Relating Building Heights to Street Width

- The Queensway – 31 m
- Bloor Street West – 26 m
- Lake Shore Blvd West – 34 m
Challenge: Transition
Challenge: Appropriate Grade-Related Uses
Challenge: Parking / Loading / Garbage
Challenge: Building Design

Mid Rise Inventory
Unlocking the Avenues

Mid Rise Symposium
November 13, 2005
Challenge: Integrating Transportation and City Building
Midrise Typology Study

City of Toronto with Brooke McIlroy & Quadrangle Architects

Study Purposes:
1. Expedite development along the Avenues
2. Standardize “Best Practices” from Ave Studies to-date
3. Encourage development of more and better-designed Mid-Rise Buildings

Preliminary Recommendations:
1. As-of-right Zoning based on built form criteria
2. Expedited Approvals Process
3. Reduction in Development Charges & Fees
Mid Rise Performance Standards (DRAFT)

1. The maximum allowable height of buildings on the Avenues will be equal to the width of the Avenue R.O.W.
   - Using the six R.O.W. widths: 20, 23, 27, 30, 33 & 36m.
   - This maximum allowable height may only be achieved if the built form demonstrates compliance with all applicable performance standards.

2. Rear transition between an Avenue property and Neighbourhood or Open Space should adhere to the City’s existing MCR rear setback & angular plane regulations.

3. Building massing will provide sunlight for a minimum of 5 hours on Avenue sidewalks (north, east and west) between March 21st and September 21st.

4. To achieve 5 hours of sunlight on sidewalks - angular plane applies to buildings fronting onto the south, east and west sides of an Avenue.
Mid Rise Performance Standards (DRAFT)

5. Mechanical penthouses may exceed the maximum height limit by up to 5m but may not penetrate any angular planes.

6. On corner sites the angular plane and heights that apply to the Avenue frontage will also apply to the other street frontage.

7. *Pedestrian Perception* step-backs (1.5m) are required for buildings above 20m in height.
   - Front step-backs help to mitigate shadow and wind impacts within the public realm, but also help to mitigate the pedestrian's perception of height.

8. Buildings 20m high and under are not required to employ a front step-back.
   - Except where required by angular planes.
Mid Rise Performance Standards

(DRAFT)

9. Buildings should generally be built-to the side property line.

10. In predominantly low-rise and/or heritage fabric areas, side step-backs are required for upper floors.

For R.O.W.s of 20, 23 and 27m wide, a 5.5m side property step-back is required above a 20m height.

For R.O.W.s of 30, 33 and 36m, a 5.5m side property step-back is required above a 27m height.

11. The base of mid-rise buildings may be required to setback to provide a minimum 4.5m sidewalk width.

12. The street frontages of mid-rise buildings should be built to the front property lines or setback lines.
Mid Rise Performance Standards

13. All new buildings on the Avenues must achieve a minimum height of 11m at the street frontage.

14. The minimum height of the ground floor is 4.5m.

15. Residential only buildings on the Avenue should employ design criteria to create adequate privacy from the Avenue sidewalk.

16. Whenever possible, vehicular access should be provided via side streets and rear lanes, not the Avenue.

17. For mid-block sites without rear lane access, a front driveway may be permitted, provided:
   - There is a minimum distance from the closest intersection.
   - The driveway is a maximum width of 3.5m.
   - A 6m-wide public rear lane is provided within the rear setback, parallel to the property line.
   - Adjacent mid-block properties have right of use of driveway and lane.
Potential Implementation Tools

Create more certainty for landowners, neighbours and members of the development community:

- New as-of-right zoning
- Expedited approval process
- Compliance alternatives (loading, amenity)
- Financial incentives (reduced DC’s)
- OBC alternatives (exiting requirements)
- Policy review (rental replacement thresholds)
- Utilities co-ordination (sewer, hydro)
Avenues and Mid Rise Building Study

- NEXT STEPS
Avenues Categorization: Right-of-Ways

[Map of Toronto showing various right-of-way widths categorized by different colors and widths.]
Categorization on the Avenues

Eglinton Ave. W.

Sheppard Ave. W.

Queen St. W.
Avenues and Mid Rise Building Study

- Phase 2 of Consultant Study: Categorization, Compliance Alternatives, Typologies/Examples
- City of Toronto Mid Rise Interdivisional Team
- Public consultation
- Industry Stakeholders
- Council Approval
- New Zoning
Mid Rise Urbanism

A form embraced around the world and associated with a higher quality of life

Copenhagen
Paris
Hammarby Sjöstad, Stockholm
THE END